

Natural Resources Conservation & Development Board
Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 3, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.
400 Willoughby Avenue, 5th floor, Juneau, Alaska

Board members in attendance:

George Woodbury (by telephone)
Cheryl Thompson (by telephone)
Bernie Karl
Carol Kenley
Suzanne Fisler

Gary Morrison, Alaska SWCD
Ryan Stencel, Alaska SWCD
Janey Moen, Alaska SWCD
Dee Pond, AACD
Cynthia Olson, Upper Susitna SWCD
Todd Pettit, Palmer SWCD
Eric Wade, Palmer SWCD
Doug Vollman, Kenny Lake SWCD
Gino Graziano, DNR
Jeanne Ostnes on behalf of Rep. Craig Johnson

Others in attendance:

Shana Joy, DNR
Franci Havemeister, DNR
Bob McFarlane, Dept of Law
Steven Daugherty, Dept of Law

- ☐ Call to Order – Determination of Quorum
 - It was determined that a quorum was present and the meeting was called to order by the Chair at 9:06 a.m.
- ☐ Election of Officers
 - Cheryl moved to nominate George Woodbury as the Chair of the board. Bernie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
 - Carol moved to nominate Bernie Karl as the Vice Chair of the board. Suzanne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- ☐ Approval of Agenda
 - Suzanne moved to approve the agenda. Carol seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- ☐ Approval of September 29, 2008 Meeting Minutes
 - Bernie moved to approve the minutes as received. Suzanne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- ☐ Executive Director Report (see attached)
 - Shana Joy summarized the Executive Director report for the board.
- ☐ Commissioner Irwin was not able to be present to address the board. Deputy Commissioner Dick LeFebvre was traveling and unable to participate by telephone.
 - Bernie Karl stated that he would like to hear about the wood bison placement issue of state versus federal land from the Commissioner and

asked that it be placed on the next meeting's agenda. Bernie said that the bison are not wanted on federal land and that their release on state land will put a halt to any development because of their endangered species status. Shana will bring up the issue with the Commissioner and report to the board. Wood bison may appear on the next meeting's agenda.

- HB 12 Overview – Jeanne Ostnes on behalf of Representative Craig Johnson
 - Jeanne was not able to participate in the NRCDB meeting but did provide a packet of information, distributed during the Alaska SWCD meeting, and answered questions at that board meeting. This item will remain on the agenda for the next meeting to be held by teleconference later this month.
 - Creation of an Alaska Invasive Species Council is the next step to bring all of the agencies to the table for participation.
 - Other states have councils of this type and they are more successful in securing funding.
 - There would be a sunset date for the council; once its purpose was satisfied, it would be dissolved.
 - The council would develop a statewide strategic plan and invasive species policy.

- HB 70 Overview
 - A representative from Representative Gatto's office was not available to provide a presentation but a summary of the bill was forwarded and has been distributed to the board for their consideration at the next meeting. An invitation will be extended for a staff member from the Representative's office to participate and answer questions at the next board meeting.
 - The board discussed the bill. It was brought up that a 7% incentive is already given to Alaskan businesses under state law and would this not be a duplication of that earlier law? The bill also discusses agriculture education in the classroom. The board asked why not then just fund and support the FFA program? The board has questions regarding the farmers to food banks pilot program mentioned in the bill.
 - It was brought up that mandating all schools support FFA programs would not be effective across Alaska; some areas are not agricultural based culturally.
 - Further information will be requested from Representative Gatto's staff. This item will be on the next meeting agenda for further discussion.

- Invasive Weeds and Agricultural Pest Coordinator Gina Graziano
 - Gino works in the Division of Agriculture, Plant Materials Center
 - He is working on setting up a strategic planning process for invasive species.
 - March 26th at the Plant Materials Center

- He will be reviewing the relevant regulations to see if updates are necessary.
- Gino provided input about HB 12
 - The goal is to get everyone together to begin development of a strategic plan.
 - It is a model that has been used elsewhere and states with councils tend to be viewed as more credible when requesting funding.

☐ AACD Funding Request

- AACD has provided two letters to the NRCDB over the past several months. The first letter dated in October 2008 was regarding AACD's request to the Office of Management and Budget for \$900,000. The second letter dated January 2009 was a request to the NRCDB to support AACD's request to DNR for \$750,000.
- Todd Pettit was asked to clarify what AACD was requesting. Were two letters being asked of the NRCDB? Todd was not sure if both requests were still active.
- Bernie pointed out that DNR has not historically carried any budget items on behalf of the soil and water conservation districts and asked why DNR was not supportive of the request.
- Bernie pointed out that any sentiments need to go to the Commissioner of DNR, not OMB as the proper channel.
- Suzanne pointed out that the funding request from AACD should include items from the district's annual reports that are successful and high impact projects to provide further impact to the request.
- Bernie further recommended that AACD ask for more than \$750,000 or \$900,000 but rather ask for \$1.2 million which would probably be cut down to a lesser amount.
- George requested a draft letter be prepared by Shana Joy for circulation to the board for suggestions and then signature by George.
- Bernie asked if DNR had any discretionary funds available to assist the districts. Shana will look into that.

☐ Public Comments

- Todd Pettit thanked the board for the past funding that went to the Palmer district and for the board's overall support.
- Doug Vollman pointed out that most of the districts have individually sent out their reports and information to their legislators. He also brought up the Kenny Lake district's Tonsina North Road project and asked if it might qualify under the stimulus package. He said that districts have not historically been supported by DNR. He agrees with Bernie's comments related to HB 70.

☐ **Board Comments**

- AACD had requested a donation of \$4,000 to \$5,000 to sponsor a speaker for the AACD conference in March. From the information provided to the board regarding the proposed speaker, the board was not inclined to consider the matter. The NRCDB does not have funds available for use in this manner.

☐ **Next Meeting Date and Location**

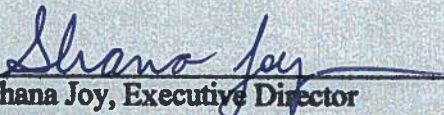
- The next meeting, possibly in person, will be in conjunction with AACD's conference March 26th - 28th.
- Location of conference is the Embassy hotel in Anchorage.
- A teleconference meeting in the next 2-3 weeks will be held to discuss HB 12 and HB 70.

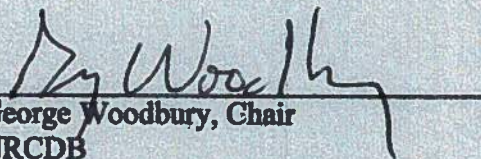
☐ **Adjournment**

- Bernie moved to adjourn at 10:00 a.m. Suzanne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes taken by:

Minutes approved by:


Shana Joy, Executive Director
NRCDB


George Woodbury, Chair
NRCDB